With The Rambler

THE pictorial features and the history of the River road, which leads west from the Rockville road at Tenleytown, are not to be exhausted in the course of a single ramble, or, for that matter, in the course of several rambles. A week or so ago the Rambler told of his trip over a section of this very old highway and carried his narrative as far as Henry Loughborough's stone house, a part of which was an Indian trading post in that remote time when such things were to be met with in the country around Washington. Last Sunday the walk led past that old gray house, with its evergreen screen and shade of pines and cedars, and farther along the River road to the valley of Willetts branch, which is the next watercourse to be crossed after you have turned your back on Little Falls branch.

After crossing Willetts branch and ascending to the higher ground on the westward side you come to a small house with rough stone chimneys, which stands on the left of the road. That house ever so long ago, and no one seems able to find out how long ago, was known as the Spinning Wheel Tavern. It was the Spinning Wheel Tavern a good many years before the coming on of the American revolution.

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Local antiquarians have sought to delve back to the time of the erection of that house, but have given over the task, saying that they are sure it was standing there and doing a thriving trade with the wagoners and stage coach passengers traveling between east and west when what is now Montgomery county was a part of Prince Georges county. Montgomery county was created in 1775 and the Spinning Wheel Tavern was an institution then. This house has been the subject of particular inquiry by Mrs. Henry Loughborough and by Mrs. Frankstone, who lives on the Bell Mill road, about four miles west of the tavern, as well as by members of other old Maryland families who are actively interested in the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and its work.

The Rambler stopped at the tavern for a rest and a chat with the people who live there today and who have long lived there. The head of the family is Jehu (not John) Willett. Mrs. Willett is the daughter of Rachel Shoemaker and Thomas Dean, and the Deans owned the tavern as far back as its history can be traced, which is to 1775. Mrs. Willett's father was Thomas Dean, his father was Thomas Dean and his father was also Thomas Dean, who was running the Spinning Wheel Tavern at the outbreak of the American revolution and who became a patriot soldier in the independence cause.

It was called the Spinning Wheel Tavern because its sign was a spinning wheel, which in those times was understood as a symbol of industry and thrift. Some taverns were the "Red Horse," the "White Horse," the "Blue Dragon," the "Boar's Head," the "Golden Pheasant," etc., but this tavern, a few miles west of the spot on which the capital of a new nation was to rise, was the Spinning Wheel. That device was in the second-story window, above the main door, fronting the pike. When the house was partly remodeled, just after the close of the civil war, the spinning wheel was removed and nobody with whom the Rambler has talked about this subject knows what became of it.

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Mrs. Willett remembers when the road by the tavern was lined by trains of wagons, and she has heard her father tell of the great business done there before people began to travel on such new-fangled devices as railroads. Hundreds of travelers have been together at this tavern at one time, for it was then a larger structure than the picture shows, the present house being a part of the ancient roadside inn.

Several years ago the Rambler wrote a story of a trip through the country west of the American University and over the fields through which no roads at that time led. On that trip he came upon a little cemetery, fenced in with iron pickets, but upgrown with a tangle of vines. It was a Shoemaker burying ground and he copied a number of the epitaphs. Last Sunday, when Mrs. Willett said that her mother was Rachel Shoemaker of that neighborhood, the Rambler recalled the little cemetery which he had come upon long before. Mrs. Willett knew all about it. The people sleeping there were her people. Rachel Shoemaker was the daughter of Samuel Shoemaker, and a good many years ago the Shoemaker family owned a number of farms in that territory, their land extending from the Rockville pike to the receiving reservoir near the District line. There were the farms of Samuel Shoemaker and of his brothers, Isaac, David, Charles and Jonathan.

The Willetts have several children, and one of the sons, with his wife and children, lives in a house back from the River road and a few hundred yards distant from the Spinning Wheel Tavern. The Rambler invited the whole family to stand before his camera.

After saying farewell to the Spinning Wheel Tavern and its folks the Rambler resumed his westward way along the River road. Crossing another branch and climbing another hill you see near the top of this hill, and on the left of the way, a high bank, matted with brambles and honeysuckle, and growing on top of the bank is a big cedar tree. There is a swinging gate and a long lane leading back to a house with steep roof, stone walls and dormer windows, and feeling that something interesting lay that way the Rambler pushed open the creaking gate and trudged down that long lane.

* * *

Living there now is W. B. Stacks. He has been there about twenty-five years, and living there before him was James H. Dailey, whose daughter became Mrs. Stacks. Before it came to be known as the Dailey place it was the Posey place, and was in possession of a branch of that old southern Maryland family for many years, just how many the Rambler could not find out, because in that locality the old settlers the Rambler met with do not seem to preserve a very distinct remembrance of the Poseys who lived there, but some time this part of the history of the place will come out. Mr. Stacks said that some of the women interested in neighborhood history had told him that the house was built about a hundred and sixty years ago and its gray stone walls seem to support that estimate.

Leaving the Posey place and continuing westward you pass a great tract of land on the right of the road posted over the name Hardy. He is a farmer and dairyman and lives in a village-like cluster of white buildings far back from the road. These Hardy lands formerly belonged to the Counselman family, and on the road near the end of the walk which led to the cave at Cabin John, the Rambler came up with a nephew of the Counselman who at one time owned those long stretches of fields and woods.

* * *

Patent Office Fires.

AGITATION over the fire danger in the patent office brought to the Rambler recollections of the great fires of September 24, 1877, and December 15, 1836. In a recent report to the House of Representatives the commissioner of patents said that "the crowded condition of the patent office, which has been called to the attention of Congress, is steadily growing worse and the danger of fire is very serious."

Only a few days after that report was sent to Congress fire broke out in a storage room in the subbasement on the G street side of the building. The blaze, which was discovered soon after 1 o'clock on the morning of February 24, was due, it was believed, to crossed electric wires.

The Rambler, to refresh his memory of the historic fires and to reproduce in these columns the known facts concerning them, wrote to the commissioner of patents for information. The letter found its way to the chief clerk, and through his stenographer, who is also an enthusiastic walker, the Rambler secured the loan of a valuable pamphlet entitled "An Account of the Destruction by Fire of the North and West Halls of the Model Room in the United States Patent Office Building on the 24th of September, 1877, Together with a History of the Patent Office from 1790 to 1877. Illustrated." This pamphlet was issued at Washington, presumably by the patent office, October 23, 1877, and the copy before the Rambler appears to have been loaned to him by U. E. McElroy.

* * *

In the matter of the earlier disaster to the patent office this old record gives the information that on the morning of the 15th of December, 1836, the post office building was discovered to be on fire, and although many of the archives of the general Post Office Department were saved, not a thing was preserved in the patent office, save one volume from the library, of little value to any one. There is no graphic description and very little on record of interest in reference to this important event.

It is related in this old publication that "Mr. William Steiger, who is living (1877) and was a clerk in the office and resided on E street, directly opposite the patent office, says that he was awakened about half-past 3 o'clock in the morning by the information that the office was on fire. He dressed himself and ran out, and, although the fire had evidently been burning some time, only four or five persons were on the ground. He ascended the steps of the patent office building and tried to get in at the east door, but could not do it on account of the dense smoke issuing from it. He then made efforts to spread the alarm, running down to Pennsylvania avenue and from there to C street, where the commissioner lived. When he and the commissioner returned to the building they made efforts to reach the patent office, but the fire had made such progress that their attempts were futile, and everything was destroyed."

The House and Senate committees on post offices and post roads submitted, January 20, 1837, a report on the destruction of the patent office, in which they said that they had examined thirty-two persons, and that the evidence taken was conclusive that the fire originated in the cellar under the city post office, but in which room they were unable to say with certainty. They were also unable to charge the fire to any particular cause, although they remarked that the ashes which came from the wood fires about the building were stored in a pine box, holding from fifteen to twenty bushels. This box was in a room in which the patent office had its winter wood stored.

"It is in evidence," the committee remarks, "that, a year before, fire had been discovered in this box, but had been extinguished before any damage was done, and it is possible that the fire originated in this box." A correspondent of the New York Journal of Commerce, ascribing the fire to the ash box, wrote: "These ashes are the perquisites of some of the minor officials and were gathered in the cellar until they were called for by the purchasers. And when it is remembered that the dry pine wood used for kindling the fires was stored in the same room, there seems to be no necessity for resorting to supposed incendiarism in accounting for the mischief."

* * *

December 19, 1836, on motion of Senator Ruggles of Maine a committee of five was appointed to examine and report the extent of the loss and to consider what measures ought to be adopted to repair the loss and to establish such evidences of property in patented inventions as the destruction of the models and drawings may have rendered necessary for its security. The committee made its report January 9, 1837, and a brief extract from that report follows:

"The patent office contained the largest collection of models in the world. It was an object of just pride to every American able to appreciate its value as an item in the estimate of national character or the advantages and benefits derivable from high improvement in the useful arts—a pride which must now stand rebuked by the improvidence which exposed so many memorials and evidences of the superiority of American genius to the destruction which has overtaken them.

"The number of models was about 7,000. Many of them displayed great talent, ingenuity and mechanical science. The great American inventions, pertaining to the spinning of cotton and wool and the manufacture of fabrics, in many respects exceed those of any other nation, and reduced so much the expense of manufacture that the British manufacturers were reluctantly obliged, at the expense of no little national pride, to lay aside their own machinery and adopt our improvements to prevent our underselling them even in their home market. In this department were the inventions of Browne, Thorpe, Danforth, Coulliard, Calvert and some others. The beautiful operative model of Wilkinson's machine for manufacturing weavers' reeds by one operation was considered one of the most ingenious mechanical combinations ever invented. Of this character was Whittemore's celebrated machine for making wool cards. There were several models of valuable improvements in shearing and napping cloth, patented to Swift, Stowell, Dewey, Parsons, Daniels and others.

"In another department were several models of machines for manufacturing cut and wrought nails. The machinery for this purpose, which has reduced so much the price of that important article, was of purely American origin and was invented by Briggs, Perkins, Reed, Odiorne and several others.

"That report tells of other models—those of American inventions in the use of steam and of agricultural machinery and implements—which were lost. It is interesting to note that the model of Fulton's steamboat was not in the patent office, the report setting forth that "The name of Fulton is associated with one of the noble efforts of genius and science. It has often been regretted that no model was preserved of his steamboat, which was the first to demonstrate the practicability of making steam subservient to the purposes of useful navigation. There was, however, deposited in the patent office a volume of drawings, elegantly executed by his own hand, delineating the various parts of the machinery he employed, and embracing three beautiful representations of his steamer making its first triumphant struggle against the opposing current of the Hudson. * * * It contained also an account of his experiments in the resistance of fluids and various estimates of the power required to propel vessels of various tonnage and form through the water at a greater or less speed. This volume, which should have been preserved among our choicest archives, shared the fate of everything else in the office. What sum would be too great to be expended in replacing it?"

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In the old record which lies open on the Rambler's table it is recited: "Shortly after 11 o'clock on Monday, the 24th of September, 1877, an alarm of fire was sounded. It was soon followed by the general alarm. But little attention was given to it by the people until the rumor flew through the city that the patent office was on fire. Columns of smoke were seen issuing from its roof and a shower of flying cinders gave evidence that a serious fire had begun its work. It seemed almost incredible, however, that it could do much damage to the beautiful building upon which it had fastened itself. Yet the fact that so important a government edifice was on fire created great excitement."

There was a vain belief that the patent office was fireproof, yet the roof sheathing, the purlines, trusses and ceiling were pine. Under the south end of the roof on the 9th street side was a conservatory for the winter care of plants, and the walls, shelving and flooring of this room were wood. North of the conservatory and extending to G street was a room in which were stored 12,000 rejected models. The staging and shelving in this loft-like room were wood. Beneath the inflammable roof and the loft full of inflammable material was the model room, which occupied the third floor of the building. The model cases were pine wood and glass, and in the hall were 200,000 models of inventions, many historic curios and mementoes and the nucleus of the National Gallery of Art.

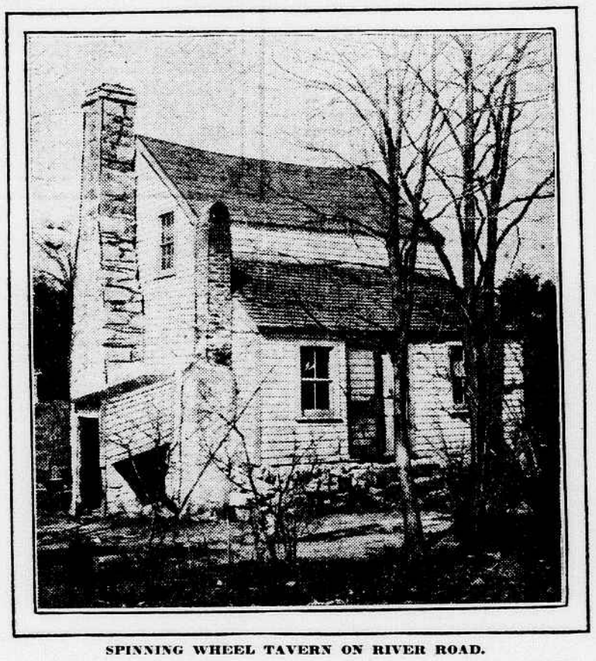
* * *

The origin of the fire was never determined. There were various theories. When the engines arrived there was long delay in getting water on the fire. The firemen were obliged to carry their hose up two stairways and through 500 feet of hot and smoky corridors before a stream was turned on, and entrance to the loft, where the fire was fiercest, was by a narrow and crooked stairway. There was also trouble with the water pressure, the fire being eighty feet above the street. The whole west wing was ablaze before the lines of hose began their play on the flames. After half an hour of fighting Washington called for help from other places, and an engine from Alexandria and four engines from Baltimore came as fast as special trains could bring them. There was great activity on the part of the people of the patent office in removing books, papers and such other valuables as they could. At about 2 o'clock in the afternoon it appeared that the firemen were getting the flames under control. Great efforts had been put forth to keep the buildings on the opposite sides of 9th and G street from taking fire, and a small army of men were busy wetting down their roofs and fronts. Detachments of regular soldiers and marines and of the District militia were ordered to the scene of the fire to hold in check the crowds and keep guard over the entrances to the building. All night they remained on guard, while officers and clerks of the patent office worked in replacing in the undestroyed part of the building the things which they had removed from the burning building. The engines pumped all night.

The roof and the model rooms and their contents, on the west and north sides were destroyed. In those two halls were 87,000 models, among them being several thousand known as "pending" or "issue" cases. So much material impossible to replace was destroyed that no effort was ever made to estimate the loss by the fire in dollars and cents.

WILLETT FAMILY AT SPINNING WHEEL TAVERN.

POSEY, STACK'S PLACE WEST OF TENLEYTOWN.



SPINNING WHEEL TAVERN ON RIVER ROAD.

KEEPING THE ARMY WELL IS THE JOB OF SURGEON GENERAL GORGAS

Man Who Abolished Yellow Fever in Cuba and Made Panama Livable Accomplishes Wonderful Results in Preserving Health of Soldiers—For the First Time in History Has Kept Disease Out of Large Military Camps—Nation's Defensive Forces Better Prepared Than Ever to Vanquish Disease, Always a More Potent Enemy Than Human Foes, in Any War That May Come—Keeping Men Well Has Become a Distinct Function of the Medical Department of the United States Army Since the Spanish-American War.

WAR is an unhealthful occupation. An army, as a rule, loses more men by disease than by casualties in action. Masses of men assembled in military camps are apt to breed disease.

The only effective soldier is the healthy soldier; the invalid is not only ineffective, but he is a distinct drag on his healthy comrades, and, hence, to military operations.

From a military, from a humanitarian and from an economic point of view that army which has the highest percentage of healthy men in it is the best army.

Silly, isn't it, to waste space stating these self-evident truths?

Still, it is only in recent years that their full significance was appreciated in this and other countries. The old established military idea was that the medical departments of armies were to take care of the sick and wounded. The fact that there are always more sick than wounded in the course of centuries finally impressed itself on governing bodies. Hence the new military idea is to keep men well. It makes less patients.

* * *

Keeping men well, then, has become the distinct function of the medical department of the United States Army since the Spanish-American war of 1898. Really wonderful things have been accomplished in that direction.

An example: In 1898 there were 25,000 cases of typhoid fever among the 216,000 American troops in the field. During 1913 out of a total force of some 97,000 men in all branches, including the troops in the Philippines, those in China, those on the Panama Canal Zone, those of the Porto Rico regiment, those in Hawaii and those in Alaska, there were but four cases of typhoid. Two of them were acquired by recruits before joining the army.

Consider the fact that during the year 10,000 of these men were in camp along the Texas border and that during that time not a case of typhoid occurred among them.

Results like that tell what preventive medicine means. To get the results in official language, listen to the words of Brig. Gen. William C. Gorgas, surgeon general of the United States Army:

"The great reduction in the amount of preventable disease foreshadows great economies to the government as practical application is developed. Until comparatively recently the duties of medical officers were almost entirely confined to the care of the sick and wounded. In keeping with modern tendencies, specialization has developed and to their former duty is now added that of sanitary science with the practice of preventive medicine in the field and garrison, the handling and disposal of the sick and wounded in campaign, and the various specialties of the civilian physician and surgeon. All this requires preparation and training unknown in past years."

* * *

Medical officers are very fond of reducing things to statistical bases. What they call the "non-effective rate" is the true index of the loss of an army from disease and injury. This rate indicates the average number of men in each 1,000 incapacitated for duty each day during the year. For the American army in the last fiscal year, the rate was 23.97, the lowest ever recorded for the army.

A soldier who mashed his thumb in tacking up a picture in the post exchange figures in the "non-effective rate" for the time being; so does the soldier who irritates a temperamental mule and gets kicked in the abdomen; so does the soldier who shocks his well regulated stomach into revolt by taking into it, on day's leave, substances in character and quantity never intended for human digestion.

Still, the day's average of soldiers figuring in the non-effective rate last year was less than twenty-four out of every thousand. Some things, like the mule's kick, perhaps cannot be prevented. What can be prevented the medical department of the army prevents, and that is disease.

Suggest to Gen. Gorgas, that modest, white-haired, gentle, self-effacing but world-famous officer, sitting at his desk in the War Department, that he and the medical department he commands are solely responsible for the extraordinary advances the American army has made in recent years in the job of keeping well, and he is shocked. He insists that full credit shall be given to the line officers for what they have done.

"They," he insists, "impressed with value of the lessons of camp sanitation and preventive precautions, have become enthusiastic supporters of these advances, and are hardly second to medical officers in their knowledge and experience in such matters."

And right there, as he explains, is the secret of the whole thing. A spirit has been infused into the American soldier, be he officer or private, that makes him just as proud of his ability to keep well as to perform some strictly military duty in perfect form. That makes for efficiency.

* * *

No longer is "camp fever," otherwise typhus, looked upon as something inevitable in the scheme of military life in the open. Every American soldier now knows that typhus, which in wars past has killed far more troops than human enemies ever did, is communicated by the body louse. Soldiers in the civil war did not know that. They regarded the "army grayback" as something inevitable; annoying, true, but not a serious menace. Today the soldier from the day he enters the service is taught to make war on this parasite.

Modern military training in the American army, in other words, spells training in personal hygiene. "Teaching men to take care of themselves," is the way the soldier expresses it.

Teaching men to take care of themselves occupies a larger place today in military training in America than teaching them to march in perfect alignment did in an earlier day. Keep clean, keep your feet in good condition, keep your stomach and digestive apparatus functioning properly, avoid suspicious drinking water, do not let litter and filth and garbage accumulate about your camp, but destroy them instantly. These are a few of the precepts of the modern military commander. They are regarded, strictly from a military point of view, of higher consequence than any other, save the cardinal ones of "shoot straight" and "obey orders."

Of course, it would be absurd to say that American soldiers are in advance of all of the rest of the world in this respect. Gen. Gorgas makes no such claim. Japan, with a thoroughly well organized medical department, in the Manchurian campaign demonstrated the military value of camp sanitation and preventive medicine as it had never been demonstrated by any army before.

And Kitchener, whose insistence on long training of green troops in England before he will send them to the continent is a matter of general comment, is concentrating that training really on just two things: how to take care of one's self and how to shoot, the first, of course, involving that essential subject of camp sanitation.

* * *

In all great wars, as Gen. Gorgas or any other student will tell you, the one problem of taking care of the wounded always swamps the medical corps. Not yet has any army got to the point of possessing an adequate organization for this one job. Hence, as Irving Cobb and other European war observers have said, the theater of the war in Europe is the vast stench, which means inadequate facilities for treating the wounded and taking care of the dead. Epidemic is the certain result.

But—and here is the ideal of the medical department of the American army—teach unceasingly the lessons of military sanitation and personal hygiene until the resulting practices become habit, and strive to build the department to the point where, in the event of war, it will be able to disprove history and fail to break down under the strain.

Fortunately the mobile American mind in the rank and file of the army has grasped the modern idea, perhaps more comprehensively than it has been grasped in any other present-day army. The result is the hearty cooperation throughout the service mentioned by Gen. Gorgas in the words quoted above.

But, with all due respect to Gen. Gorgas' modesty, the fact remains that the present low ineffective rate in the American army, the high health rate, the new respect for disease preventive measures, all are due directly to the activities of the medical department of the army, and, in a very large measure, to the activities of Gen. Gorgas himself.

What Gorgas did in Cuba pointed the way to what might be accomplished. He went into Cuba in 1898 as a major and surgeon. He remained. He cleaned up Havana, and then he cleaned up Cuba. He eliminated yellow fever.

* * *

Now, back in 1763 the British captured Cuba. They whipped the Spanish and took possession. But yellow fever and other tropical diseases whipped the British and whipped them soundly. Old Yellow Jack made Havana too hot to hold them. They had to surrender to him and get out. Were the Americans, the succeeding foreign invaders, 135 years after, also to be defeated by Yellow Jack? They were no better prepared than the British were. As Gen. Gorgas has set forth the situation:

"We were handicapped by lack of training and experience. We had had practically no experience in the tropics. While we had gone into Mexico in 1846, there was little of the knowledge then existing of tropical diseases that has since been accumulated in India, Africa, Eastern Asia and tropical America. Nor did the memory of what we may have learned in Mexico come down to us fifty-two years later. The great development of preventive medicine was not then in a stage convenient for practical application. The people were not educated up to its ideas."

Gorgas began his war on Yellow Jack immediately on his arrival. First, Havana became clean. Then the mosquito that bears the infection of yellow fever was destroyed. Yellow Jack went down to his first defeat.

Then, when the construction of the Panama canal began, Gorgas, who had leaped to the front as an authority on tropical diseases, went down there and made the Canal Zone livable for the white man. Never had such a thing been done before.

Meantime, the lessons of Havana and Cuba which Gorgas and his colleagues in the medical department had demonstrated impressed themselves on the army. Camp sanitation and military hygiene became to the fighting officer and man something more than abstract phrases. The results were before their eyes. Respect for medical officers went up tremendously.

Theretofore the attitude of the average fighting man toward the army surgeon was much the same as his attitude toward the regimental chaplain. The surgeon and the chaplain were handy to have around when one was sick or wounded, but so far as the surgeon having any real military value—why, the idea was absurd. The surgeon's discourses on camp sanitation were listened to tolerantly. His suggestions as to camp sites and water and disposal of refuse and filth were heeded only when it was easy to heed them. At other times "the exigencies of the military situation" were the only things considered.

* * *

If the Spanish-American war and its resulting other tropical campaigns taught the American army nothing else, however, it taught the value of camp sanitation by deadly, direful example. When the boys from home in the volunteer regiments died like sheep in camps at Chickamaugua and elsewhere in the United States, as well as abroad, the country was horrified.

As a result of it all, and primarily as the result of what Gorgas and other medical officers demonstrated practically, there was a swift readjustment of military organization which brought the medical officers into greater power and authority.

Today the selection of a camp site is not left to the engineer or the quartermaster as it once was. The medical man must be consulted. Today the commissary is not the whole thing in determining what the men shall eat and drink and wear. Again the medical man is respectfully consulted. He has a military status he never had before.

And the medical man shows results. Camps on the Texas border prove this. It is a demonstrable fact that never in the world's history did so many soldiers remain so long in camp with such a low non-effective rate. The camp no longer is a disease breeder.

To the increased military power and authority given to the medical officers is due the introduction of compulsory inoculation to immunize against typhoid. Voluntary inoculation introduced in 1909 produced striking results; compulsory inoculation came in 1911. Since then this great foe of humanity, which annually causes some 25,000 deaths and about 250,000 cases in the civilian population of the United States, has been practically non-existent in the army.

* * *

What the army medical men can do when they have a chance is graphically told by Gen. Gorgas in facts regarding the 5,000 Mexican federal troops and their camp followers of both sexes, that fled across the border after the battle of Ojinaga January 1 and 2, 1914, and were interned at Fort Bliss and Fort Wingate. Typhoid and smallpox were rife among them when they came with their accumulated filth.

They were compelled to build a sanitary camp. Then in one day 4,943 of them were lined up and inoculated against typhoid and vaccinated. These diseases promptly ceased. Since then the health conditions have been admirable, for the American medical officers are always on the job. No similar number of Mexicans in Mexico ever had such a low death and disease rate as these people possessed.

Gen. Gorgas has in the medical department, which he commands, some 5,000 people. They are divided as follows: Medical officers, 426; medical reserve officers on active duty, 91; contract surgeons, 16; commissioned dental surgeons, 28; contract dental surgeons, 39; Army Nurse Corps, 150; Hospital Corps, 4,055; civil employes, 239.

Wherever there are American soldiers the medical department is represented, watching over, guarding, protecting the health of the men.

But, Gen. Gorgas points out, his organization is barely adequate to do the work it should do in time of peace. It is still far from being ready to meet the emergencies of war. No insurance is taken against the future. True, some things have been done.

For example, every military unit is now supplied with a stock of medical supplies, and enough are held in reserve to supply an army of 250,000 men. But with military experts talking of an army of at least a million in the event of war, this is not large, though vastly better than in 1898. Then when war came there were no reserve supplies. Some of those ordered were not delivered until six months after the proclamation of peace. So far, then, the situation has been improved.

* * *

Archaic laws and regulations still remain as a handicap in places. If war should come—and this is something constantly being put up to the medical department by both official and citizen inquirers—it is far from being in shape to expand to the demands of the situation. Its dependence would have to be in trying to provide enough trained men to pull through the untrained, and a very considerable dependence would be the trained regulars of the purely fighting branch to pass on to the recruits their knowledge of hygiene and sanitation.

"Of the regulars," said Gen. Gorgas, in discussing this matter, "all but the recruits will average one to three years of experience that has taught them how to take care of themselves in field and camp. Among the volunteers some considerable experience exists as a result of maneuver camps and the Spanish war—many veterans of that war being in the militia. There will be a considerable proportion of green men to be taught camp sanitation, as well as given military instruction. Much of this will be given in concentration camps.

"Fortunately, most of the officers of the volunteers will be men who are impressed with the value of sanitation in the field. They and the regular officers and older soldiers will quickly instruct the new men in the habits so essential to health in camp. There exists, then, a yeast to leaven the whole that was absent in 1898."

* * *

Some of the things most needed are described by Gen. Gorgas as follows:

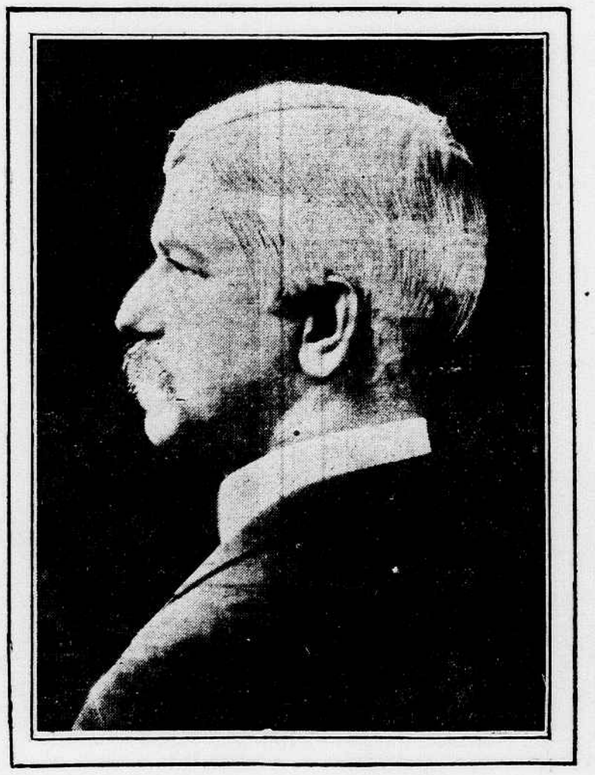
"The reorganization of the hospital corps is essential if its efficiency is to be preserved. The organization of several new field hospitals and ambulance companies in 1914 only in part remedies the glaring defect observed in the shortage of mobile sanitary units. Our present personnel permits only one-half of the regular army in the field to be served by the sanitary units prescribed by the field service regulations. In view of the great battle losses to be expected in modern wars, it is a serious responsibility to rely upon improvised units that must serve at the front.

"It seems time that a comprehensive scheme was adopted to keep medical officers trained and abreast of the times in both their medico-military and strictly professional duties.

"For some years it has been necessary to employ constantly from 90 to 100 members of the Medical Reserve Corps with troops. It is desirable that the Medical Corps be large enough to perform all the duties required in peace and any reserve of trained medical officers be effected in other ways. In time of war there will be demands for medical officers that the corps will be unable to meet. A sufficient number to meet requirements in peace is the best preparation to meet the demands upon the medical department in mobilization and war."

And this statement is illustrative of the habit of mind of Gen. Gorgas. It is not the accomplishments of the past, but the needs of the future, that engage his attention. He is building health insurance in the army. He has it now where, in his belief, epidemics of disease in any army he nation may be called upon to put in the field will not occur as they did in 1898.

ASHMUN BROWN.



COL. WILLIAM C. GORGAS, U. S. A.

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The Attraction.

SINCE his appearance before the industrial relations commission the Junior John D. Rockefeller's life, indeed, has been made almost a burden to him of late by petitioners—petitioners with lofty aims, of course, but burdensome for all that.

They are chuckling at "26 Broadway" over a young man who visited Mr. Rockefeller last week. This young man, a graduate of a western university, said:

"Mr. Rockefeller, it is plain that you have been greatly misunderstood. Now that your philanthropical ideas are better known, I venture to ask you——"

And the young man explained, in very high-flown language, that he would like a Standard Oil job wherein he could grow rich quick so that he, too, might aid in uplifting the downtrodden.

Mr. Rockefeller, regarding the young man in his calm manner, said:

"You want some way of growing rich rapidly. It's not a bad idea. And you don't want riches for their own sake, but for the sake of what you can accomplish with them, eh? In other words——"

Here Mr. Rockefeller permitted himself a dry little smile.

"In other words," he ended, "it's the spending that attracts you."